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SHOWING

THE OPERATIONS, EXPENDITURES, AND CONDITION OF THE INSTITUTION

FOR THE

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[title page]

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One of them must wash his body, one must wash his head, and the two others hold him. In return they receive one or two blankets each. During this ceremony the quqq'ō'lEn, who are described as wild men, dance around the novice. They have ropes tied around their waists, and are held by other members of the society by these ropes. Then the xEnxanl'tEl lead the novice into the woods, where he remains for a long time, until he meets the spirit that initiates him. It seems that during this time he is secretly led to the house in which the xEnxanl'tEl continue to celebrate festivals at the expense of the novice's father, and there he is taught the secrets of the society. During this time, until the return of the novice from the woods, the house is tabooed. A watchman is stationed at the entrance, who keeps out uninitiated persons. During the absence of the novice, his mother prepares cedar bark ornaments and weaves mountain goat blankets for his use. One afternoon he returns, and then his father gives a feast to let the people know that his child has returned. The latter performs his first dance, in which he uses masks and cedar bark ornaments. This dance is called nuxnEä'mEn. On this day the father must distribute a great number of blankets among the xEnxanl'tEl. The initiated are permitted to take part in the feast, and sit on one side of the house. The new member spends all his nights in the woods, where he bathes. In the spring the new member, if a man, is thrown into the sea, and after that is free from all regulations attending the initiation. One of the principal regulations regarding novices of the xEnxanl'tEl is that they must return from the woods in the direction in which the sun is moving, starting so that the sun is at their backs. Therefore they must sometimes go in roundabout ways. They must go backward through doors, which are sLā'lEqam (supernatural) against them. Frequently the siō'ua (a female shaman) is called to bespeak the door in their behalf before they pass through it. Before their dance the siō'ua must also address the earth, as it is supposed that else it might open and swallow up the dancer. It is also sLā'lEqam against the novice. The expression used is that the earth would "open its eyes" (k'u'nalaaEn); that means, swallow the novice. In order to avert this danger, the siō'ua must "give a name to the earth," and strew red paint and feathers over the place where the novice is to dance.

THE BI'LXULA.

121 171 The social organization, festivals, and secret societies of the Bi'lxula are still more closely interrelated than they are among the Kwakiutl, and must be considered in connection. We have to describe here the potlatch, the sisaa'k·, and the kā'siut. The sisaa'k· corresponds to the Laō'laxa of the northern Kwakiutl tribes, the kā'siut to the ts'ē'ts'aēqa. The Bi'lxula believe that the potlatch has been instituted by ten deities, nine brothers and one sister, the foremost among whom is Xē'mtsics, to whose care the sunrise is intrusted. He resides with the others in a beautiful house in the far east, and cries "ä, ä,"

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every morning when the sun rises. He takes care that he rises properly. The first six of these deities are grouped in pairs, and are believed to paint their faces with designs representing moon, stars, and rainbow. In the kū'siut these deities make their appearance, and are represented by masks. Xē'mtsioa and Xēmxēmalà'oLa wear the design of the full moon, indicated on the mask of Xē'mtsioa by a double curved line in red and black, the black outside, passing over forehead, cheeks, and upper lip. Xēmxēmalà'oLa has a double curved line in red and black, the red outside, which passes over forehead, cheeks, and chin. Aiumkī'lik·a and Aiumalà'oLa wear the design of the crescent, drawn in red and black, with differences similar to those between the first and second masks. The fifth Q'ōmq'ōmkī'lik·a and Q'ō'mtsioa have designs representing stars, both wearing the same style of mask. The seventh is Qula'xawa, whose face represents the blossom of a salmon-berry bush. The next in order, Kulē'lias (who wants to have blankets first), wears the design of the rainbow in black and blue. The ninth, At'amā'k, wears on the head a mask representing a kingfisher, and is clothed in a bird-skin blanket. The last of the series is a woman called L'ētsā'aplēLāua (the eater), the sister of the others. Her face is painted with the design of a bladder filled with grease. She figures in several legends as stealing provisions and pursued by the people whom she has robbed.

The sisau'k·, which is danced at potlatches and other festivals of the clans, is presided over by a being that lives in the sun. A man who had gone out hunting met the sisau'k· and was instructed by him in the secrets of the dance. When he returned, he asked the people to clean their houses and to strew them with clean sand before he consented to enter. Then he danced the sisau'k· and told the people what he had seen. He said that the being had commanded them to perform this dance and to adorn themselves when dancing with carved headdresses with trails of ermine skins, and to swing carved rattles. The man, later on, returned to the sun. Ever since that time the Bi'lxula dance the sisau'k·. Besides this, it is stated that the raven gave each clan its secrets. Each clan has its peculiar carvings, which are used in the sisau'k· only, and are otherwise kept a profound secret, i. e., they are the sacred possessions of each clan. All clans, however, wear the beautiful carved headdresses and use the raven rattles, regardless of the carving they represent. Every time the sacred objects of a clan are shown to the people a potlatch is given. The sacred objects, although the property of the various clans, must nevertheless be acquired by each individual—that is to say, every free person has the right to acquire a certain group of carvings and names, according to the clan to which he or she belongs. Slaves and slaves' children, also illegitimate children, can not become sisau'k·. A person can not take a new carving, but must wait until it is given to him by his relatives—father, mother, or elder brother. Nusk'Ilu'sta, the Indian, to whom I

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owe my information regarding the clans, and who is a member of the gens Ialô'stimât of the Talió'mx·, stated that he had received the raven when he gave his first potlatch. At his second potlatch he received the eagle. He hoped that his mother would give him the whale at his next potlatch, and would at the same time divulge to him the secrets connected with it. In course of time, he said, he might get even others from his brother; but if the latter's children should prove to be very good, and develop very rapidly, his brother would probably give his secrets to his own children. At festivals, when a person acquires a new secret, he changes his name. Each person has two names, a kû'siut name, which remains through life, and a Xê'mtsioa name, which is changed at these festivals. Thus, Nusk'Elu'sta's (which is his kû'siut name) Xê'mtsioa name was AL'ILEMNE'lus'aix·, but at his next potlatch he intended to take the name of Kalîn'kis. These names are also the property of the various clans, each clan having its own names. When a man possesses several sisau'k· secrets, he will distribute them among his children. When a girl marries, her father or mother may, after a child has been born to her, give one or several of their sisau'k· secrets to her husband, as his children make him a member of her clan. When a person grows old, he gives away all his sisau'k· secrets. After any secret has been given away the giver must not use it any more. The crest and the sisau'k· carvings must not be loaned to others, but each person must keep his own carvings. The only exceptions are the carved headdresses and the raven rattles, which are not the property of any particular clan.

The laws regarding the potlatch are similar to those of the Kwakiutl. The receiver of a present becomes the debtor of the person who gave the potlatch. If the latter should die, the debts become due to his heirs. If the debtor should die, his heirs become responsible for the debt. Property is also destroyed at potlatches. This is not returned, and serves only to enhance the social position of the individual who performed this act. It is not necessary that all the property given by a person in a potlatch should be owned by him. He may borrow part of it from his friends, and has to repay it with interest. I was told, for instance, that a man borrowed a large copper plate and burnt it at a potlatch. When doing so, he had to name the price which he was going to pay the owner in its stead. Since that feast he died, and his heirs are now responsible for the amount named at the potlatch.

The kû'siut is presided over by a female spirit, called Anañlikuts'ai'x·. Her abode is a cave in the woods, which she keeps shut from February till October, remaining all the while inside. In October she opens the door of her cave and sits in front of it. A woman is said to have been the first to find her. Anañlikuts'ai'x· invited her into her cave and taught her the secrets of the kû'siut. She wore ornaments of red cedar bark around her head, waist, and ankles; her face was blackened, her hair strewn with eagle down. She commanded the

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woman to dance in the same way as she saw her dancing. The people should accompany her dance with songs, and, after she had finished, they should dance with masks. She said, "Whenever a person sees me, your people shall dance the kū'siut. If you do not do so, I shall punish you with death and sickness. In summer, while I am in my house, you must not dance the kū'siut." 575 773 776 535

Ever since that time the Bi'lxula dance the kū'siut. When a man has seen Anaūlikuta'al'x· sitting in front of her cave, he will invite the people to a kū'siut. A ring made of red and white cedar bark is hung up in his house, and the uninitiated are not allowed to enter it. Only in the evening, when dances are performed, they may look on, standing close to the door. As soon as the dances are over, they must retire from the taboo house. Each kū'siut lasts three days. 575 776 535

The various dances performed by members of the kū'siut are also property of the clans, and the right to perform them is restricted to members of the clan. They must not be given to a daughter's husband, as is the case with the sisau'k· dances, but belong to the members of the clan, who have a right to a particular dance, but who do not own it. Permission to use a mask or dance is obtained from the owner by payments. The owner may reclaim the dance or the borrower may return it at any time. Membership of the kū'siut is obtained through an initiation. At this time the novice is given his kū'siut name, which is inherited by young persons from their parents or from other relatives. Thus a young man who had the name of Pō'pō until he was about seventeen years old, obtained at his initiation the name of L'akō'oL. I have not reached a very clear understanding of the details of the initiation; it seems that the dance is simply given to the novice in the same way as the sisau'k·, this initiation being connected with a potlatch. But still it seems possible that he must "dream" of the dance which he is to perform. Only the highest degrees of the kū'siut have to pass through a religious ceremony of some importance. The highest degrees are the ƛaxō'la (the hā'mata'a of the Kwakiutl), the ō'lƛx (the nū'LmaL of the Kwakiutl), and the dā'tia (the nō'ntsistalaL of the Kwakiutl). These grades are also hereditary. A kū'siut novice may acquire them at once at his first initiation. 535 575 [426] [551] [428] [556] [171] [554]

When the ƛaxō'la is initiated, he goes into the forest, where he encounters his guardian spirit. It is believed that he goes up to the sun, and formerly he had to take human flesh along for food. The chiefs held a council the night preceding the beginning of the ceremonies, and anyone who wanted to show his liberality offered one of his slaves to be killed in order to serve as food for the ƛaxō'la. The offer was accepted, and a payment of from ten to twenty blankets was made for the slave. The latter was killed, and the members of the ƛaxō'la order devoured one-half of the body before the departure of the novice to the woods. There the latter was tied up and left to fast. He may stay there for twenty or thirty days until the spirit appears 575 785 787 [266]

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to him and takes him up to the sun, where he is initiated. Early one morning he returns, and is heard outside the houses. He has lost all his hair, which, it is believed, has been torn out by the strong breeze blowing in the higher regions. He is quite naked, and bites everyone whom he can lay hold of. If he can not catch anyone he will bite his own arm. It is believed that he has lost his soul, which fled from the body when the spirit came to him. Therefore the shamans must try for four days to recapture his soul. The night after they have recovered it the ELAXŌ'LA dances, clothed in a bearskin and wearing a large head ring, heavy bracelets and anklets, all made of red cedar bark. Sometimes he appears wearing the mask of the S'Ā'LPSTA (fig. 266), the spirit which initiated him. This mask corresponds exactly to that of BAXBAKUĀLANUXSI'WAĒ of the Kwakiutl. Some ELAXŌ'LA do not bite people, but merely devour raw salmon or tear dogs to pieces and devour them. Those who bite people will also devour corpses. The ELAXŌ'LA has to observe a number of regulations. For four years after his initiation he must not gamble. He must stay away from his wife for one year, but this period is being reduced to one month. For two or three months he must not leave his house.

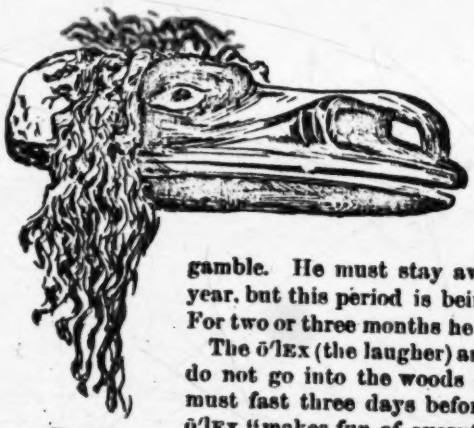

Fig. 266.
MASK OF THE S'Ā'LPSTA. Bi'lxula.
Cat. No. 77059, U. S. N. M. Collected by F. Boas.

The Ō'LEX (the laugher) and the DĀ'TIA (the thrower) do not go into the woods to be initiated, but both must fast three days before their first dance. The Ō'LEX "makes fun of everything" and scratches people with his nails. The DĀ'TIA carries stones and sticks and breaks household goods and canoes. If he has destroyed some object during the day, he pays for it at night when he dances. The Ō'LEX and the DĀ'TIA, after they have danced, must stay in their houses for one month.

If a person transgresses the laws of the KŪ'SIUT, for instance, when the ELAXŌ'LA gambles, or when a man performs a dance to which he has no right, also when a person derides the ceremonies or makes a mistake in dancing, his punishment is death. The chiefs assemble in council and the offender is called before the court. After his offense has been proved, he is asked whether he is willing to suffer the penalty of death. If he is not willing and one of his relatives is found willing to take the penalty on himself, the guilty party is spared and the substitute killed in his stead. The execution of the judgment is intrusted to the shaman, who bewitches the condemned person by throwing disease into him or by poisoning him in some other (supernatural?) way. The object thrown by the shaman is a shell, bone, or finger nail, around

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the middle of which objects a human hair is tied. If this object strikes the offender, he will fall sick. Blood is believed to collect in his stomach, and if it so happens that he vomits this blood, and with it the disease-producing object, he will recover, and is not molested any further. The masks (not the whistles and other ornaments) used in the kē'siut are burnt immediately at the close of each dancing season. Novices must wear a necklace of red cedar bark over their blankets for a whole year. The masks used in the dances represent mythical personages, and the dances are pantomimic representations of myths. Among others, the thunder bird and his servant, ALXULĀ'XNUM (who wears a mask with red and blue stripes over the whole face from the right-hand upper side to the left-hand lower side, and carries a staff with red and blue spiral lines), appear in the dances. Prominent masks are also Xē'mtsioa and his brothers and his sisters; Masmasalā'nix and his fellows, the raven and the nusxē'mta, and many others.[1]

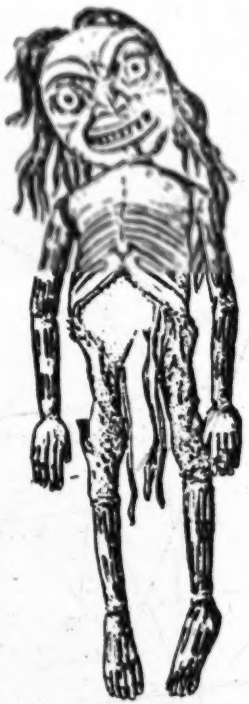

Fig. 201.
HEADDRESS OF ŌLALA'.
Haida.
Cat. No. 80626, U. S. N. M. Collected by J. G. Swan.

THE TSIMSHIAN, NĪSQA', HAIDA, AND TLINGIT.

The tribes of this group learned the ceremonial avowedly from the Hē'iltsuq. Although I have not witnessed any part of their ceremonials, the descriptions which I received bring out with sufficient clearness its similarities to the winter ceremonial of the Kwakiutl. The ceremonials seem to be almost identical among all these tribes. It is most complete among the southwestern Tsimshian tribes, particularly the G·itxā'LA, but has been adopted by all the tribes of the coast. It is said that it reached the Haida not more than a hundred years ago.

I will tell here what I learned from the Nisqa'. They have six societies, which rank in the following order: The SEMHALAI'T, MĒILA', LŌLE'M, ŌLALA', NANĒSTĀ'T, HŌNANA'L, the last being the highest. The SEMHALAI'T is really not confined to the winter ceremonial, but is obtained when a person acquires the first guardian spirit of his clan and performs the ceremony belonging to this event. The tradition of the origin of these ceremonies localizes the events at Bellabella, and it

[1] See "Indianische Sagen von der Nord-Pacifischen Küste Amerikas," page 241, by F. Boas.